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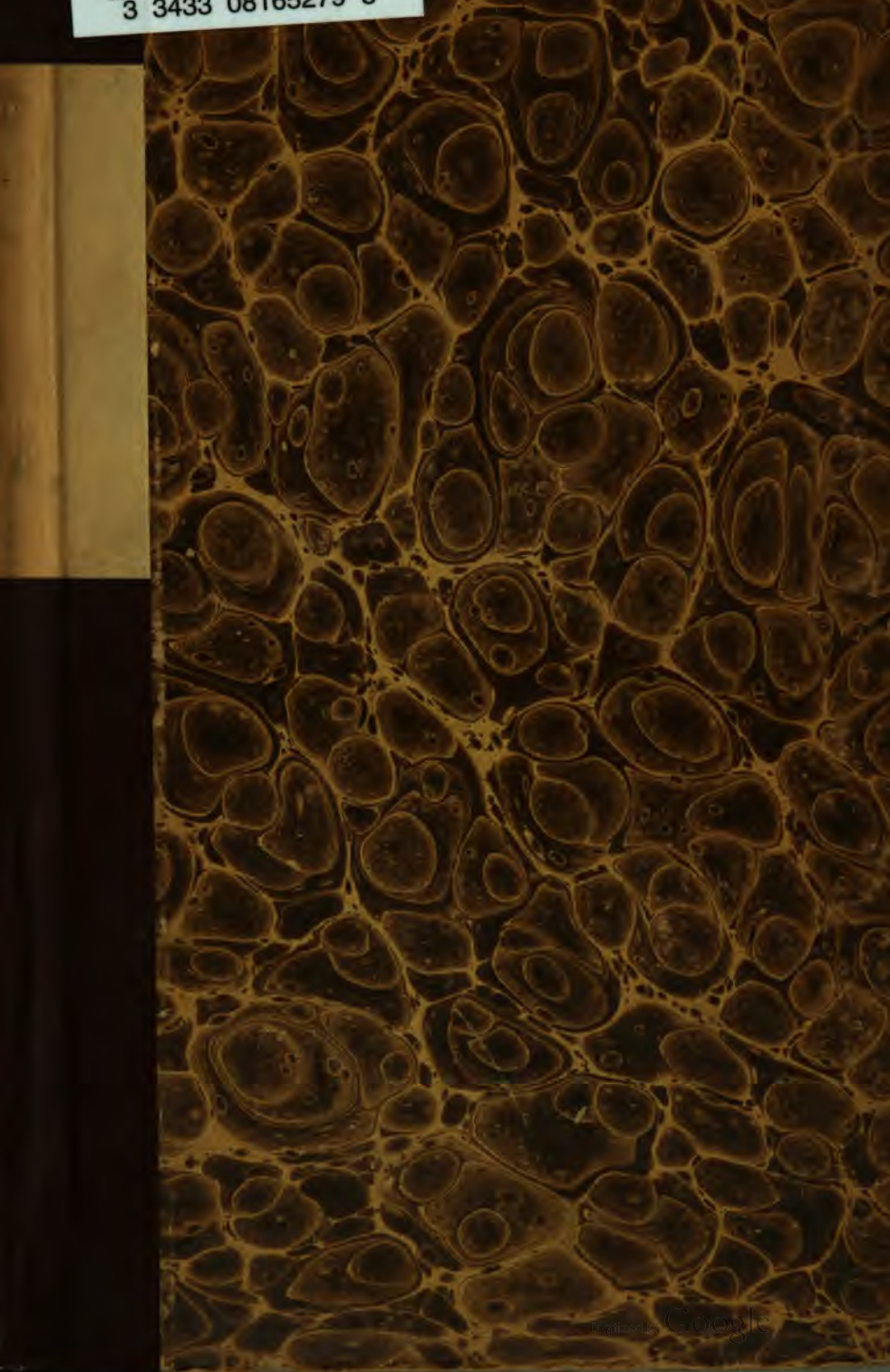
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From the Author

THE LORDS,
THE GOVERNMENT,
AND
THE COUNTRY.

(Barrow)

"Do but consider that, even in vain and frivolous action, as at chess, tennis, and the like, an over eager and ardent engaging, with an impetuous desire, immediately throws the mind into indiscretion and disorder. A man puzzles and bewilders himself. He that carries himself the most moderately, both towards gain and loss, has always his wits about him. The less peevish and passionate he is at play, he plays with much more advantage and safety."—*Montaigne's Essays*, vol. iii. p. 284.

3467
THE LORDS,

THE GOVERNMENT,

AND

THE COUNTRY.

A LETTER TO A CONSTITUENT

ON THE

PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS.

BY

Henry Lytton Bulwer, Esq., M.P.
HENRY LYTTON BULWER, Esq., M.P.

"The Tories owe their distinctive epithet to the Irish banditti, who use the word *Toree*, or 'give me,' in robbing passengers. Hence, in the old translation of Buchanan's History, the followers of Buccleuch are called the Tories of Teviotdale."

SIR W. SCOTT in *Dryden's Works*, vol. ix. p. 208.

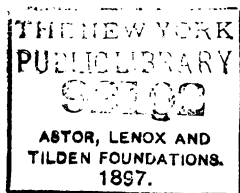
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A LETTER
ON THE
PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS,
 &c. &c.

MY DEAR SIR,

You favoured me, two weeks ago, with some observations of your own—and you also did me the honour of requesting my opinions—on the present state of affairs.

The publication of such a pamphlet as that which you then suggested, has, for some time past, been generally looked for ; and it is only because no other pen seems prepared for the task, that I at last comply with your desire.

Indeed, the topics for discussion are, as you say, inviting. Who would desire a better text for an address to the people—than that on which

the Lords preached their valedictory sermon ?
“ His promises were, as he then was, mighty ; but his performance, as he now is, nothing.”

This sentence, truly, is full of meaning. “ His promises ” — i. e., the promises of the people’s minister—were to the people “ *mighty* ; ” the result of those promises has been, “ *nothing*.” The English are a thinking nation ; they have now leisure ; and they are given a subject very worthy of reflection. Rather more than a year ago, a majority of their representatives in the House of Commons carried a ministry into office ; about six months ago, this ministry, at the head of their majority, met the public. They met it with promises which filled England with confidence — Ireland with joy.

But the words of the people’s minister, spoken by the people’s king—for the people’s king that monarch must ever be called under whose sanction passed “ the Reform Bill ”—have been mere idle sounds.

They circulated through the country—they

warmed its heart—they cheered its spirit—they made men believe—they made Irishmen, more especially, believe—that their grievances, though so long endured, might yet not be eternal—that, if hope had been for centuries deferred, it was in 1836 about to ripen into reality. But if the heart of the country was then warmed, it is now chilled; if the spirit of the country was then elevated, it is now crushed; if men believed, and if Irishmen, more especially, believed, that justice was to be done to them, even as it had been done to others, in the recognition of that principle, the very foundation of all constitutional government—that principle proclaiming, “that the will of the majority is to be obeyed,”—if men, in general, believed this,—if Irishmen, more especially, believed this,—they *are* disappointed: they *were* deceived; they leant upon a reed; they put faith in a fallacy.

The King’s speech was but a meteor destined to pass through “the troubled air” in which it was delivered. The people, the origin of power,—the sovereign, the solemn organ and expression

of that power—were to be defeated in the wishes they so religiously declared, set aside from the path they so justly intended to pursue, robbed of the rewarding thanks of a grateful nation, bullied, brow-beaten—this has been their fate. And who tells them of it?—who taunts them with it?—the much-aggrieved and disappointed country? No!

Mediocrity has been generally condemned. Horace condemns it, in poetry—Machiavel, in crime—Jonathan Wild,—a gentleman not bred to the bar, yet so connected with the law as fairly to be considered one of the legal profession,—in impudence; and Mr. Wild, in his own time, was, in this his favourite quality, far above all competition; he would hardly have been so in ours.

Let us suppose—I am quite willing to suppose—that the conduct pursued by the upper House of Parliament, during this session, has been one dictated by solemn convictions. For the Peers to act for six months systematically against the people,—for an irresponsible body to take so active

and decided a part against a responsible one,—is always a grave and an awful task, and should inspire, in serious minds, serious considerations. Under such circumstances, then, we might, as the Lords closed their labours, have expected a weighty, earnest, conscientious expostulation, full of regret and respect towards the nation that had been irritated and disappointed; a deprecatory, though not an undignified, statement of reasons for conduct so likely to produce dangerous troubles, and so little frequent in the annals of our land, or in the practice of our constitution.

But what must be the feeling of the country, expecting excuse and explanation—and meeting with contempt and invective?

To be sure, I do remember one instance of similar conduct in a clerical gentleman of some celebrity—and, insomuch, a fit example for the champions of the church. This divine was returning to his family, after having done a very foolish action. “No truant,” said he, “was ever more afraid of going to school, there to behold the master’s visage, than I was of going home. I determined, however, to anticipate the fury I

expected, by—falling into a violent passion myself.” Just so the lords—they are going home. Having done many not very wise actions, they may, perchance, be greeted with a few unfriendly observations, but, like Wakefield’s worthy vicar, they anticipate all reproach, and fall most carefully into—a tremendous passion themselves.

Many, however, who have safely wronged a nation, have found danger in insulting it; and it was hardly worth the while of a man wishing well to his country, or his order, to provoke those feelings already difficult to control, and which may produce consequences, not to be viewed with levity or indifference, should they once rise above restraint.

I admire Lord Lyndhurst’s great talents; no man can do so more than I do. I think it disgraceful to swell the cry raised against him, as leader of the Lords, by sneering at him as one of the people. He has attained a great station, and his coronet is more bright in my eyes than that of most men he is surrounded by, because it is, undoubtedly, the meed of very splendid

abilities. But, combined with the strong faculties he possesses is a lightness and boyishness of character, (his best friends will acknowledge this,) which renders him, — to a certain degree, perhaps, unconsciously, — a most dangerous chief to any party in such times as these.

“Pleased with the danger when the waves run high,
He courts the storm.”

But let him remember, and let those who follow him remember, that he has never yet been able to find, even in his eloquence, an oil to smooth and allay the tempest he so recklessly evokes.

In 1830, he was one of those, I admit, who boldly said there should be “no reform;” but he was also one of those who, shortly after this vaunting declaration, could not venture even to smuggle the monarch through his capital; abandoning the helm of that vessel he has lately so poetically described*—without ruler or rudder—on the very first murmur that was heard of the rising waters.

* “*Nonne vides ut nudum,*” &c.

In 1832 again, he was one of those who provoked the resignation of the government, and contemptuously defied the wrath and the philosophy of the people. But mark him in the crisis. Was he not, likewise, one of those who, shortly after this boastful defiance, slunk from that very indignation they had aroused, and dared not even touch the reins they had courted to their hands?

In 1834, once more, I see him amongst the men, who, summoning Sir Robert Peel from Rome, dissolved the reform parliament, and vowed they would maintain their government, with an air of resolution well becoming the desperate measure that had been taken at its formation. But, alas! for human valour, and human hopes, how many months are we to count, before we view his lordship, in the midst of his dejected colleagues, renouncing the task they undertook, as too weighty for their shoulders, and retiring, in timely confusion, from the post where they had sworn to conquer or to perish. Well has he described the course of his own adventures. At the commencement of

each enterprise,—“His promises were, indeed, mighty;” at the conclusion of each enterprise, “his performance was, indeed, nothing.”

On the last occasion, we well remember the manner in which the tory government was for some months conducted.

Its leader in the House of Commons—the Ulysses, as well as the Atrides, of his band—shewed, perhaps, more tact, more ability, and more perseverance, in a difficult situation, than any political chief ever did before him.

Yet, night after night, he was beaten; and on all occasions: he could not name an ambassador—he could not refuse or grant a charter to an university. The speaker of his choice was ousted—his address to the sovereign was altered; still, he and his followers clung to office.

“Proud men, eminent statesmen, distinguished persons! In former times, amidst such disasters, there would only be one course for a ministry to pursue; but these are antiquated notions!”

Is this my language? Do I accuse men in high place of low and sordid motives? No;

the language is Lord Lyndhurst's, who, with all the bitterness of recollection, has been painting his own party's former condition.

We, on this side of the house, his Lordship continues, were obliged to discharge the duties of the government. Here is a phrase, taken, word for word, from Sir John Hobhouse, and spoken (the parody ought to have been acknowledged) when Lord Lyndhurst was himself a minister.

There is, indeed, in the two cases, some similarity—but this difference—the former government could not get their measures through the House of Commons into the House of Lords; the present government has the measures of the House of Commons stopped by the Lords.

The one could not commence, the other cannot complete the business of the country.

The position is certainly a serious, perhaps an alarming one. In order to understand its merits, and to speculate considerably as to its result, it is necessary to take a calm review of the session that has just glided by us.

There are two dispositions of mind peculiar to

the English people, which do not at first sight seem so easily combined. On the one hand, they will endure an injury for a considerable time, and are slow in taking any violent measures to redress it. On the other hand, they will always magnify the evils under which they labour, and be glad to imagine they are much worse off than they really are. I have seen enough of popular oratory to know, that if you wish to please an English audience, your surest way is, to exaggerate their misfortunes. Say they are bankrupts, slaves, and likely to continue so—they will cheer you at every sentence—even the last; but permit a ray of hope, however dimly, to gleam through the clouds of your discourse, and you are at the mercy of the next orator, who may denounce you as ~~no~~ no patriot, if he pleases.

It is not, then, without much fear, and some hesitation, that I venture to declare, that I do not look back upon the last six months, nor forward to the next twelve, with so much gloom and dissatisfaction as many I converse with; and perhaps the most extraordinary part of the confession which I volunteer is this—that

(notwithstanding Lord Lyndhurst's exulting tone, and the country's drooping and disappointed spirit,) I know of no session—I know of the business of no session—which inspires me with such positive certitude as to the result of a conflict between popular and exclusive principles, as that which has just closed upon our labours.

Is this so very startling? Let us consider!

For the first time since the passing of the Reform Bill, the Tories have this session openly avowed and maintained the policy of refusing every thing to the demand for improvement which they can possibly withhold;—Sir Robert Peel's prudent policy has been exchanged for his more daring rival's. The consequence is, that all those moderate men who formerly stood dubious between the parties, expelled from the enemies' camp, have entered ours.

Thus, the opponents to the cause so bitterly misnamed "Conservatism" have increased,—while at the same time every advantage we have obtained has been a complete triumph, and affords, according to the very policy and avowal of our adversaries, a vantage ground, from

which we may, with increased numbers, assail their new position.

Well, at first we are apt to imagine, because they have resisted us wherever they could, that we have triumphed nowhere: but is this the case?

In order to set a proper value upon a step in the advance taken to-day, it is necessary to cast one's eye backward, and see how many years it has been successfully opposed.

Even Mr. Ward's motion, carried shortly after the meeting of parliament,—that motion, by virtue of which are published the divisions, with the proceedings of parliament,—is an immense innovation, and establishes as a constitutional principle—what has long been disputed as a democratic theory—the necessity of bringing every act of the representative under the eye of his constituents.

Then comes the Prisoners' Counsel Bill. Not so complete as it was intended to be, that I grant; still, shorn of part of the merciful provisions with which we endowed it, it has still, even in its altered shape, changed the whole system of our pleading, and introduced into our

criminal code, which wants many such amendments, a new principle of benevolence and justice.

Then, there is the Stamp Duties Bill, lowering the tax on political information from three pence farthing, or thereabouts, per newspaper, to one penny. Both of these measures open the road we have been so long wanting to clear, — diffusing the knowledge of our laws more readily, and making their method of execution more lenient. It might have been better to have removed all the duty, you may say. I think so too; but consider how long the bare acknowledgment of the mere abstract principle, that knowledge ought to be cheap, has been contended for! consider that no government in our time has ever before submitted such a proposition to the House of Commons, and that no very great number in the House of Commons had ever voted in favour of it; and then consider, above all things, the herd of rival interests, all covering, and able to cover, their opposition to popular instruction, under the pretext of attachment to their particular constituents!

Believe me, the victory achieved was neither inconsiderable in itself nor is it likely to be so in its consequences.

Then you have the Dissenters' Birth and Marriage Registration Bills—only a portion of what is due to the dissenters worse than they might have passed, yet still better than any enactments, with a like object, heretofore proposed.

In addition to these, you have the 11th Bill; not the measure, perhaps, we might precisely have desired—but nevertheless a measure which offers something like a prospect of that long-desired peace between the clergy and their congregations which we have never before even attempted to establish.

Lastly, and as a partial triumph, it ought first to have been proclaimed, we have vanquished the adverse party on their favourite ground; and put down and exposed, and shamed the Orange Lodge faction throughout our dominions.

For all future measures, then, of representative responsibility, for all future measures of improvement in our jurisprudence and our press; for all future acts of justice to the dis-

senters for all future acts promising concord between the laity and the church for all future and necessary repression of the factious plots of the intolerant in Ireland, we stand on a higher ground in 1836 than we have done at any former period.

Let us now turn to the other side of the picture, review the measures that have been lost, and in following the course of business through the two houses, do justice to both.

How stood affairs at the Easter holidays?

"The representatives of the nation have seldom passed the first period of the session more profitably. Ministers met Parliament with a stock of useful and well-digested measures. — *Spectator*, April 12th, 1836.

I quote from a journal, able, just, and which, of all the liberal papers, is the one that shews, perhaps the least attachment to the existing government. So much, then, for the parliament and the ministry before Easter. So much in vindication of the promises Lord Melbourne made, and the course which the House of Commons took.

We have now to see why these promises were

not performed, and here we come at once to the policy which the House of Lords pursued!"

Their campaign opened, immediately after the vacation, under the auspices of their new leader, whose eloquence, sharing the peculiar nature of those meteor gleams which play about corruption, not unaptly made its first display upon the rights of Stafford.

Let justice be fairly done! The gold of Whig and Tory here found equal favour. What borough more amiable? All who came and paid, were received and loved.

Lord Eldon smiled at so logical a defence, and over this political Susannah was thrown the ermined mantle of our elders.

Then came Poole Corporation Bill—Charitable Trustees' Bill—Civil Officers' Declaration Bill—Imprisonment for Debt Bill—Jewish Disabilities Bill—Post-office Commissioners' Bill—Edinburgh Poor-rate Bill—Scotch Court of Session Bill—all sharing the same fate!

I say nothing of the private bills:—London and Brighton Railway—Manchester and Chester Railway—South Durham Railway—Trinity Harbour—Dundee Water-works, &c., &c.

Who are the destructives now? Surely, in the way of legislation, there never was appetite equal to a lordly one! Such a digestion, too,—no qualms of stomach, or of conscience!—not a wry face made even by Lord ————

The ancient aldermen, those images in their Lordships' likeness,—the very fac-simile, as we are told, only in a baser metal, of the coroneted coinage,—they are famous, too, for their festive powers,—but the appetite of our old civic dignitaries for turtle and venison is not, for a moment, to be compared to the voracity with which these Legislative Dandos gobble up measures of improvement! Anything in the way of reformation in church or state, roads or bridges, is only to be put upon their table—to be gone in an instant!

Even these things they do not actually devour, they spoil and pollute.

“Exstruimusque toros, dapibusque epulamur opimis,

At subito horrificæ lapsu de montibus adsunt

Harpyiæ, et magnis quantiunt clangoribus alas:

Diripiuntque dapes, contactuque omnia fœdant

Imundo.

Virgil's powers of prophecy are here put beyond a doubt. How exactly is the whole scene de-

scribed! The *monibus* *annding* evidently to the Upper House. The *magnis clango-ribus* as exquisitely describing the violent speeches it has resounded with. Then, that very point at which I paused—the desire to spoil everything not actually devoured—so admirably expressed by the *contactu omnia fedant im-mundo!* Yet still, horrible to say! they are not satisfied—they are not satiated—they cry out for more. Where is your *Chancery Bill*?—where your *Ecclesiastical Court Bill*? Stop, my lords!—perhaps you have more reason to be contented with your work than even you yourselves imagine—let us, at all events, take a nearer view of the mangled remains you are sur-
rounded by!

BILLS THROWN OUT

CHARITABLE TRUSTEES' BILL.

<p><i>Brought in</i> for the pur- pose of placing funds in- tended for charity, under public and popular control.</p> <p>June 7th.</p>	<p><i>Thrown out</i> because it conferred the power of dis- posing of those charities on one of the two parties in each town—i.e., on the most numerous party. Aug. 4th.</p>
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EDINBURGH POOR RATES BILL

Dropped by the C.
Brought in to equalize
the poor rates in Edin-
burgh, by taking away cer-
tain exemptions from poor
rates claimed by the legal
bodies! March 14th.

Thrown out because the
lawyers thought it spoli-
ation to be obliged to pay
like their fellow citizens,
and would only agree to do
so on a sop being given to
the church. July 25th.

MUNICIPAL ACT
Brought in to repair the
damages which the Muni-
cipal Corporation Act re-
ceived last session from the
Lords, more especially in
those parts maintaining the
real administration of cha-
ritable funds.

AMENDMENT BILL.

Thrown out by the Com-
mons in consequence of the
Peers insisting on amend-
ments, which tended to
change its purpose.

Thrown out on the plea
of further time for con-
sideration and want of evi-
dence.
N.B. The case has been
considered for fifty years,
every commission since
1777 agreeing on a remedy,
and there are only nine to be
considered for fifty years,
every commission since
1777 agreeing on a remedy,
and there are only nine to be

One amendment giving,
in particular cases, the right
of choosing the mayor—
not to the burgesses, but
to the council, opposing
the old principle and
spirit of corporate reform.
The other still leaving
the funds destined for
charity in the hands of
those very persons who had
so notoriously misapplied
them to parliamentary cor-
ruption. August 11th.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS BILL.

Brought in to improve the registration of voters—extending in some instances the elective franchise—fixing a well-organized system of registration, and thereby preventing the subsequent expenses attendant upon election petitions. Saving about £14,000 of the public money.* Feb. 11th.

Dropped by the Commons in consequence of amendments in the Lords, directly perverting its intentions; one clause more especially having been introduced for preventing town voters voting also for the counties.

This would have been nearly all the liberal county members. N. B. Lord Wharfedale, who led the opposition in the Lords, stated that he opposed it as a bill intending to effect great reforms by small degrees.

POST-OFFICE COMMISSIONERS BILL.

Brought in to place the management of the post office in the hands of permanent commissioners, instead of those of a postmaster general, removable by a change of ministry; the chief commissioner having, however, a seat in the House

Thrown out on the plea of further time for consideration and want of evidence.

N. B. The case has been considered for fifty years; every commission since 1777 agreeing on a remedy; and there are only nine folio

* A clause for limiting polling in counties to one day, having been inserted, was withdrawn, in order to be made the subject of a separate bill.

of Commons, and this re-
presenting this important
office as a useful service,
amongst the representatives
of the people, instead of
as a gift to a few of show
and state, amongst the
Peers. July 16th.

STAFFORD DISFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

*Brought in on account of
the notorious bribery that
had been so long carried
on, and under a regular
system, at every election.*

Feb. 9th.

vols. of evidence already in
print.* August 12th.

*Thrown out (Commons'
Bill) because it would dis-
franchise the new consti-
tuency created by the Re-
form Bill. July 29th.*

(Lord's Bill, to disfran-
chise the burgesses and give

the right of voting to the
10% householders.) *Thrown
out because it disfranchised
the old burgesses. August
4th.*

* Lord Lowther contended that so far from the bill being intended to
create jobbing in the post-office arrangements, it was calculated most
effectually to prevent it. (Hear, hear.)—*He was not at all disposed to
represent administration, that they shewed a disposition to create commis-
sions on every possible occasion; but, so far from this being the fact,
he was prepared to prove, that under their arrangements several had been
suppressed; and, indeed, he would go so far as to say, that if a comparison
were instituted between them and their predecessors, the balance would
be found much in their favour. (Loud cheers from the Ministerial
benches.) He felt it but his duty to give expression to this opinion,
which, coming as it did from a political opponent, could not be questioned
on the ground of sincerity. (Loud cheers.)*

...of evidence to show
...of evidence to show

If all the bills have been introduced
have not the Wills with the
writers of full Stafford have
been proposed to be, what
winds, Grimes, Campbell,
800, who were all Wills.
Lord Lyndhurst is a
... 16th July 1841.

POOLE CORPORATION BILL.

Brought in to eject the
councillors and corporate
officers, who had been ille-
gally elected. April 20th.
... 16th July 1841.

Thrown out—because
their Lordships found it
their duty to resist it, first,
because the case was pend-
ing in a court of law, se-
condly, because it was de-
cided. August 1st.

(Lord's Bill to dis-)

BILLS TOO LATE.

... of evidence to show

CIVIL OFFICERS' DECLARATION BILL.

Brought in for the pur-
pose of affording relief to
different classes of dissen-
ters, who objected, from
conscience to certain oaths
now necessary for muni-
cipal employments. Brought
in March 24th.

Thrown out because too
late in the session. August
16th.

IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT BILL.

Brought in for the pur-
pose of satisfying creditors
by possession of the pro-

Thrown out because too
late in the session, and as
the Duke of Wellington

perty of their debtors in-
stead of by the persecution
of their persons, and for
preventing insolvents from
remaining in prison, and
thus uselessly spending that

money which should be
divided for the benefit of
those they are indebted to.

JEWISH DISABILITIES BILL.
Brought in to give those
taxed as citizens the rights
of citizens; Lord West-
minster stating, that the
prejudices against the Jews
existed in no other place in
Europe except the spot

where he was standing.
June 14th.

SCOTCH COURT OF SESSION BILL.
Brought in to lessen the
costs of Justice, by cutting
diminishing fees, &c., one-
fourth. March 30th.

BILLS DAMAGED.
THE PRISONERS' COUNSEL BILL.
Brought in to allow
counsel to prisoners in cri-
minal cases.

said, because, he saw no
reason why they should not
deal with it this year on the
11th of July, as they had
last on the 10th of August.
July 11th.

JEWISH DISABILITIES BILL.
Dropped, because too late
in the session. August 19th.

THE PRISONERS' COUNSEL BILL.
Dropped, because too late
in the session. August 9th.

COUNTY ELECTION POLLS BILL.

Brought in to limit polling in county elections, to one day, &c.

Damaged, by the Lords striking out the beneficial clause of limitation of polling to one day.

REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND MARRIAGES BILL.

Brought in to secure an accurate registry of all sects, and to make the marriage ceremony legal without religious distinctions.

Damaged, by giving the appointment of district registrars to the Tory guardians of the poor, and also by directing the reading of the notices of marriage at three weekly meetings, after the conclusion of other business.

Observe this list! I say nothing of the rejection of the Poole and Stafford Bills: these are poor, paltry, partial, and isolated attempts to protect corruption and foster abuse. What I look for is, some principle that may direct our appreciation of the policy and general course of conduct to be expected from our opponents.

Observe, then, I say, this list! Why is the Charitable Trustees Bill thrown out? Because it places public funds at the disposal of a party.

Is not the public money of the state at the disposal of a party? Does not our constitution make it so?

What does this prove? It proves the same principle on which the Charitable Trustees Bill was opposed, the whole power of the House of Commons might, at the time, were fitting; be opposed also. Observe, I say, this list! Why was the Municipal Act Amendment Bill thrown out? Because the Lords insisted on vesting the election of the mayor in the council; and because they also insisted on placing public money in the hands of those who had been proved guilty of public corruption. What does this prove? A hatred to authority conferred by the great bulk of the people; and a carelessness of guilt that leads to Tory advancement.

Why is the Edinburgh Poor-rate Bill thrown out? Because it tends to do away with unjust privileges and distinctions, and did not, in so doing, enact unpopular imposts.

What does this prove? If lawyers should be freed from paying taxes, why should not Lords? If the annihilation of this legal exemption is

only to be purchased by a clerical bribe, why should not every abuse be maintained for the privilege of huckstering for another? or is it not

I come to the Registration Bill. That is rejected by the Commons. Why? Because the Lords protesting the deepest veneration, the most profound respect, for the Reform Bill, incur a claim which would strip that measure of one of its most important and popular provisions. What does this prove? That there is no security for the Reform Bill but in our own vigilance.

The Post Office Bill—that shares the common fate. For what reason? Because fifty years' investigation does not show adequate inquiry, and nine folios of evidence is not testimony sufficient.

I say, again, observe this list. Weigh all this matter well! The necessity of what reform can we hope to establish when fifty years' constant research, and nine ponderous tomes of reports and examinations, are deemed not even the first stratum of that ground on which anything like improvement is to be erected? Or, again,

where is the popular power, or the popular principle, in our institutions, that would be safe if the Peers had twenty more members in the House of Commons? Public money, say they, should not be at popular disposal—the heads of corporations had no right to be elected by their fellow townsmen—lawyers decidedly ought not to pay poor rates—and the Reform Bill should not materially be altered. I have enumerated the bills thrown out for being introduced in the session. They were four most important ones. In vain said Lord Melbourne, the duration of Parliament depends upon its business. No, it is the month of August. Creditors cannot be relieved—the conscientious scruples of Dissenters cannot be removed—Jewish disabilities, that blot upon our Christian church, must remain—justice to Scotland can on no account be made cheaper. It is too late in the session for all this. Yet still there is such a charm in consistency—yet still, though time flies so fast, and law moves so slowly—still, says Lord Lyndhurst, let us plunge—it will be

some relief from the dog days into the Cimmerian labyrinth of Chancery and ecclesiastical improvements! There had twenty more members

No; quite sufficient measures were brought forward—quite sufficient food was administered to this reckless craving after public detestation! And here let me draw your attention to one circumstance. In all I have hitherto said perhaps you are astonished at the omission I have not alluded to Ireland. The people of England and Scotland as far as I have hitherto gone have alone the right to complain. Supposing Ireland sunk in the sea—supposing the gentleman upstairs had no such implacable antipathy to its six millions of Catholic people—supposing Mr. O'Connell was not their bugbear, and that they did not legislate for a nation according to their spite for a man; supposing all this which is supposing a great deal, still there would be as much difference between the two houses as there now is. I say more—for on some of the questions I have enumerated where the Tories in the Lords took a decided part, the Tories in the Commons did not. Here the Duke of Wellington was repre-

my Lord Lyndhurst and the Duke of Wellington
 jostling for the first place—Lord Stanley already
 on the shoulders of Sir Robert Peel—Sir James
 Graham nodding knowingly to his confiding con-
 stituents, and pointing to reaction in the shape
 of Mr. James

What says the old distich?

Away, away, the Whigs to meet it!

And then, my lads, to Downing-street!

The starting post of this band is Ireland; to
 Ireland let us go!

The principal measures brought in for Ireland
 last session were the Catholic Marriage Bill—
 intended to give Catholic priests the same power
 in respect to marrying the Protestant and the
 Catholic; that the Protestant priests possess of
 marrying the Catholic and the Protestant.

To know what the law now is, it may be worth
 while to refer—not to the opinion of any Whig or
 Radical of the day—but of power. No, in 1769,
 Sir George Macartney was appointed Secretary
 to Ireland. This was not yesterday. What
 does he say of the system of which this law is a
 part, and of this law itself?

There shall be a multitude of other instances in these
 popery laws, not less harsh and oppressive, but
 these in a Bill of every recent date, which will
 scarcely be credited, it is actually a fact, that in
 Ireland a marriage between a Protestant and a
 Papist is null and void to all intents and purposes,
 without any process, judgment, or contravention of law
 whatsoever. Nay, a marriage between two Pro-
 testants, if celebrated by a Papish priest, is equally
 ineffectual. Such have been the recent wisdom and
 virtue of the Irish legislature, that a husband may
 abandon his wife, on the wife the husband, after
 twenty years' cohabitation, and their whole race be
 legally bastardized. Instances of such marriage and
 dishonour are indeed, very rare; for, happily, the
 honest affections of mankind are too strong for the
 tyranny of such unreasonable statutes. Barrow's
 Life of Lord Macartney, vol. ii. p. 121.
 Still, the late Marriage Bill is rejected, the
 opinion of the Tories in 1836 is behind the
 opinion of the Tories in 1769.
 Then came the Irish Municipal Bill—intended
 to give to the Irish nation real municipal institu-
 tions. The Lords made it a bill for taking away

from the Irish people, even the semblance of such institutions. They followed the Irish Church Bill—attended, by a small sacrifice, to conciliate 6,000,000 of Catholics to a Protestant church of 800,000. The Lords forget the 6,000,000, and insist upon legislating only for the 800,000. I have enumerated these three questions, but they are all comprehended in one, viz., the policy we should pursue towards the majority of the Irish. Is this simply an Irish question? The people of England are a just people, and even were they not immediately concerned in the satisfaction of so large a bulk of their fellow-citizens, I do believe, notwithstanding Mr. O'Connell's misgivings, that they would perform their duty. But is our policy towards the Catholics in Ireland simply an Irish question? There are some few zealots who, I believe, really hate, and would conscientiously oppress, as their fathers did oppress, the Irish Catholics, merely on account of their being Catholics. But the Duke of Wellington and Lord Lyndhurst, who turned round, at a moment's notice, on the

Emancipation Bill, who were against emancipa-
 tion from policy, and for it from policy—the
 circumstances altered, and changed—they de-
 spising, while they profit by, the superstition of
 their followers—are only acting from policy now.
 They are for keeping down the Catholics, not
 because the Catholics go to mass and the con-
 fessional, but because, during their long perse-
 cution, that body became naturally attached to
 the party in the state which wished to relieve
 their servitude. It is not because they are Ro-
 manists in religion, but because they are liberals
 in politics; that the Tory leaders—able, ambi-
 tious, and not bigoted men—raise the “hue and
 cry” against them throughout our country, and
 would subjugate and trample upon them in their
 own. Any decrease or increase of the power of
 the Catholics in Ireland, is an increase or de-
 crease of the power of the Liberals in England.
 The Reform Bill was carried by Irish members;
 Sir R. Peel’s administration was turned out
 by Irish members; so say the Tories themselves.
 Well then, what follows? Why that they should
 hate the power by which these members were

returned; that they should hate the creed to which they generally belong, that they should hate and execrate the eloquent and indefatigable leader under whom they have fought and, more than all this, that they should oppose with all the energy they possess any policy which seems to sanction their cause, or to increase their numbers.

Our policy towards the Irish, then, is not only incorporated with that policy by which the English and the Scotch are also to be governed, it is the very thermometer, as it were, by which we can judge of the temperature of the general policy and government of the three kingdoms. Were the Catholic Emancipation Bill repealed to-morrow, the Reform Bill might be repealed also, and the Tories would be in power.

If that Emancipation Bill be extended, and the spirit which dictated it be suffered to dictate new laws in conformity with it, then the Reform Bill will be extended also, and the Tories kept out of power.

The cause we have all at stake is put upon this issue, and not without some skill and craft

by our opponents, who imagine that, by fighting the battle of English and Scotch Reform upon Irish ground, the struggle will not be felt by the people of England and Scotland to be an English and a Scotch one.

They make a masked attack upon a main point, under the appearance of boldly storming a distant and useless outpost. They would enter our very citadel at home, and persuade us that they are merely carrying their arms into an almost neutral territory. They hope, under the cover of our apprehensions of Catholicism, to smother our sympathy for the advocates of freedom. In short, they march against reform, and preach a crusade in favour of religion.

Here I might leave the Irish question, for really all that can be said on the two main branches of it—Municipal Reform and Church Improvement—has, in almost every variety of shape and language, been already brought before the public.

Still, however, as an appeal must ultimately be made to the country, more especially on these

two points, I shall endeavour, as far as I can, to concentrate the present state of the argument upon them.

In respect to the Protestant establishment, no one denies these things:

That it has a large revenue almost impossible to collect;

That it represents the feelings of a very small portion of the population;

And that, during 300 years it has made no proselytes.

Now if any person wished to establish a ground for alteration in a church establishment, what could he wish to state stronger than these three facts—which all persons and all parties, even the parsons themselves, admit?

What alteration, then, do we propose?

To take a small part of this large revenue, in order to make the rest easier of collection.

To apply this small part in such a manner as may interest, conciliate, and enlighten that population which is hostile to our creed.

* Thus, if ours is to be, as Lord Stanley says it is, a missionary church, we have given it in some degree those

We provide for the levying an unpopular impost, by making its purposes more popular.

We graft on an anti-national establishment a national use; and we adopt, as the best course towards proselytism, a system of popularizing our clergy, who have become loathed from a system of persecution.

This is our policy.

The Lords say—"We do not want to make titles more popular, in order to collect them without opposition; because we can now, in spite of opposition, collect them by severity and force."

"We do not want to conciliate people who are aliens by blood; we think, on the contrary, that they should be kept aliens by laws." We do not think that proselytism is best secured by a priesthood who are beloved; but rather by a priesthood who are hated. This is the Lords' policy!

To pass over the right of Parliament to deal with Church property to contest it is absurd,

qualities which every missionary studies, as his first means towards success, to cultivate those qualities which make him beloved, and revered; and understood by the nation to which he preaches.

with the history of England open at the page of Henry VIII.

What is the church, I should like to know?

the clergy of the church? or the congregation

of the church? those who perform its duties?

or those for whom those duties are performed?

and if the congregation of the church be the

church—as every one of sane mind acknowledges

it to be—who but the body representing that

congregation have a right, and the only right,

to deal with its property, or consult for its inter-

ests?

To maintain the contrary is to maintain that,

if all the people were of one religion, a clergy

should be supported by the state to preach

another—that if the whole earth were covered

with tombstones, we would have no right to

remove the ashes of the dead in order to find

food for the living.

I drop the Irish Church Bill. Let us look at

the Irish Corporation Bill.

And I like to see these two measures in juxta-

position, for their junction shews, after all, the

miserable cant of superior godliness put forth

to catch the vulgar (the vulgar are no longer
 the masters of life) that still is not the rea-
 son of Protestantism, but the policy of Protes-
 tantism—not the spread of a pure and beautiful
 faith, but the spread of an inflexible and facti-
 cious party, for which those, especially, who imitate
 themselves Protestants in Ireland now intend
 to let the church be left even, in the hands of
 its self-declared champions, and secure pro-
 sacreious state attempts to reach the smallest
 of its securities for the impious purpose of in-
 structing the poor. There is a question, at last,
 which cannot, by the wildest interpretation,
 be hallooed at as church spoliation. It is a
 question, not of taking away, but of giving, and
 simply of giving, and of giving what is a
 blessing attendant upon the Government,
 under the combined activity and order of which
 Europe emerged from barbarism, and England
 grew to be the great and prosperous empire that
 she is. There is a benefit to Ireland as well
 Protestant and Catholic forget the creed that
 divides them, and remember only the country
 which unites them?

19 No, though policy can now (such an excuse
 from history; the same old and state system of
 persecution is to be pursued as of old, and this
 peculiarly so. On the Irish Corporation Bill, we
 are told that the Irish are not to have the same
 municipal institutions as the English, because
 they differ from the English. On the Irish
 Church question, we are told they are to have
 precisely the same church establishment as the
 English, because Ireland, in all state matters, is
 to be considered as part of England, and yet
 the Irish, though part of England, in all religious
 matters, and resemble them, by the Duke of
 Wellington's own bill of Catholic Emancipation,
 in all civil matters. Thus, we are called upon to
 legislate in like manner for England and Ireland,
 where they notoriously differ, and to make laws for
 them as different where they are as notoriously the
 same. There is, however, a consistency in this course,
 which does not at first sight appear; a harsh and
 cruel consistency, which I cannot think will find
 favour with the British Nation. We admit, a

distinction between the two people, where the majority of the Irish suffer by such distinction. We maintain a similarity where the minority of the Irish gain by such similarity. Whenever a grievance is to be inflicted upon Ireland, after the example of England, then all differences are forgotten; whenever a benefit is to be conferred on Ireland, after the example of England, then all differences are remembered.

Well, may we be told that our spiritual pastor visits his Irish fold, not to feed the flock, but to fleece it—that our temporal Sovereign visits his Irish people, not to confer charters, but to confiscate them. Talk of normal schools indeed! whose is the policy of the school-room? The schoolmaster is abroad; ay, verily, he is leader of the Tory Peers. Lo! over the very portal of their council chamber is inscribed the celebrated school maxim—“*He that loveth his child, chasteneth his child.*” In the very marrow of their policy is found the celebrated school doctrine—“*Whatever is agreeable to the taste is hurtful to the constitution.*” Throughout all their conduct reigns

that academic harmony which subsists only by combining the most cajoling words with the most castigating measures.

"There is agitation in Ireland; how should there not be agitation?" A principle and a policy the one directly opposed to the other are each sanctioned, and, at the same time, brought into conflict. The principle is, "representation," which gives a majority power; the policy is, "exclusion," which would make the "minority" predominant. Must not every practical man see that this is a state of things contrary, not to this species of rule or that species of rule, but to all wise and temperate rule whatsoever. Either the principle of representation must be put down, or the policy of exclusion must be abandoned. You must have a cause, not without its effects, but with its effects. You must get rid of the Reform Bill, and the Catholic Emancipation Bill, or you must be prepared to govern with the good will of those persons, whatever their creed, who compose, under these two bills, the greater portion of electors.

That persons should differ on many constitu-

tioners, but I can well understand, and that
 they should not differ on Irish policy, if English
 party politics were not at the bottom of the
 question, would seem to be utterly incomprehen-
 sible. It is not a dispute between a democratic
 system of government and an aristocratic
 system of government, but between a monarchical
 system of government and a republican system
 of government—a dispute between a possible system
 of government and an impossible one.
 It is rare that political questions admit of so
 easy and evident a solution, but here there is
 really no room for dispute. The simplest manner
 before our eyes is peace and civil contention—a
 costly army to keep down a people, a contented
 people, who would be an army;—public support
 to passive resistance.
 It was a common belief in former times, that
 the conduct of princes was the subject of direct
 and immediate inspiration from heaven. In
 the manner, Members of Parliament have lately
 put forth the same pretensions; and we know,
 upon the testimony of Sir Roger Gresley, that

whenever the malt tax is under consideration, Providence pays the closest attention to his votes.

I confess that I am inclined to adopt this ancient and recently established superstition, and to believe, that there is some secret and mysterious influence frequently directing the counsels of statesmen and legislators at perfect variance with all the ordinary rules of prudence and policy, that should direct their conduct.

I will suppose a young man entering into life, and, with that noble passion which distinguishes the citizens of a free state, anxious to attach himself to one of the leading parties. He would look at the principles of these parties, and, above all, he would look at their chiefs, and see if he could trace in their career any of that political foresight, or practical statesmanship, which would inspire him with confidence; either as to the rightfulness of their cause, or the fortune of their policy.

"Lord Stanley," he would say, "in face, the staunchest opponent of popular rights, what has been his course?" "Oh! he was one of the most able and eloquent advocates of Reform in

Barliament. The Duke of Wellington shews the power of the Roman Catholics, what has been his course. On the great act of his civil life was passing the Catholic Emancipation Bill. "What," he would say, "are these to be? My leaders, men who take every pains to avoid their enemies; before, they declare war upon them. Are these the prudent, practical, and consistent persons to whom I am to pin my faith, and by whom I am to direct my judgment?"

"Either they have been for ever weak and vacillating in their opinions, or they have shewn the most utter incapacity as to foreseeing the consequences of their measures."

I appeal to the Tories themselves—his retrospective satisfactory. And yet, what is their own doctrine?—that the past should guide and prophesy for the future. We accept it.

And now, having gone at greater length than I intended into these two questions, the Irish Church and the Irish Corporations—which form, as I have said, but one question—the proper policy towards Ireland; having shewn, or attempted to shew, also, how that policy is incor-

perated with our policy towards England and towards Scotland, I will turn to a new question—viz., the conduct of the Government in the session that has just passed over us.

My testimony may not be altogether an impartial one, I am in a certain degree, no doubt, attached to the present Ministry; but I will take this opportunity of stating, that I do not consider myself, because belonging to a profession in which the Government has quite as many opponents as friends, bound, as an ordinary member of any government is, nor would I, as I should not find it difficult to prove, sacrifice my opinions to any professional distinction, or official employment;—though I do not affect that ridiculous disdain of the public service which, if carried to any extent, in attaching discredit to our public departments, necessitates their being discredibly filled. But I am not guided by personal motives—I support the ministry, and I am adherent of the ministry, and I am connected, if you please, with the ministry, because I believe it better than any which, if it were destroyed,

to-morrow, could be formed upon its ruins, and, indeed, the very best we ever had in this country. As long as I do believe this of the existing Government, I shall support it, and feel in no wise ashamed of being either its follower, its member, or its advocate. When I do not believe this, I shall, with equal readiness, oppose, and endeavour to overturn it. This appears to me the only sensible and practicable course of action ; for I am not one of those who — like the child that throws mamma's gingerbread into the fire, and cries for a piece of the moon, which looks prettier—would refuse what is good and possible, for what might be better and is impossible.

Now, if you are reading this page, you have followed me through a pretty long list of ameliorations (such they appear to me) in our policy and administration which were proposed last session in the Commons and rejected by the Lords. Do you think what I have said sufficient to excite your indignation against the leaders of one party? If you say " Yes," I

claim your sympathy and your approbation for the leaders of the other.

If the measures on which you differ from the Lords are so essential as to sever you altogether from the opponents of those measures, are they not sufficient to link you with the advocates of them? Do you require less grounds for hatred than for love?—for indignation than for sympathy? Are you prepared to say, that the principles for which you declare war are not the principles for which you will enter into alliance? Are you prepared to widen, as far as you can, the circle of your hostilities, and to narrow, as much as possible, the circle of your friendships? If so, your opinions may perhaps be reduced into very agreeable and plausible theories,—you may frame on paper a more beautiful republic than Plato's, and depict with your pen a more charming Utopia than Sir Thomas More's; you may see the most lovely dreams, and be visited by the most heavenly of visions; but for all the active and stirring business of mankind, for all the practical and active part of politics, you are

as totally unfit as the philosophers of Gulliver's Flying Island.

Quit "the Forum" and "the Market-place," and retire to the study and the closet. Do this, do anything, rather than confound, by idle and empty declamation, those who are more able to act, and are less eager to talk—who live in a real world, and not an imaginary one—who, like the wise men of Attica, think the best laws for Athens are the best laws which the Athenians are capable of receiving.

On all subjects you have not agreed with the Government, most undoubtedly it is so. The essential property of liberty is to beget differences of opinion.

From the towers of Rome waves one universal flag over the whole papal dominion. But visit those who have taken their consciences into their own keeping—visit every spot into which protestantism and dissent have penetrated. In the same town, in the same village, nay, frequently in the very same family, how many different shades and variations in belief! Yet your ancestors, when Rome was powerful, van-

quished Rome, by fighting together. They rallied themselves—a motley band—round one standard—“REFORM!” Their universal cry was—“*Some reform is necessary*,” and thus they were able to make head against those who as unanimously declared, that “*All reform was impious*.”

They who trace the march of empires and the progress of opinions, will tell you that the contest for religious reform in the sixteenth century has, in the natural and almost inevitable current of events, been succeeded by a contest for political reform in the nineteenth. Let us do, in the one case, as our ancestors did in the other! Let Reform, in both cases, be the watchword of a party, containing differences amongst its members, but united against its foes—losing sight of its own minor distinctions in a steadfast and constant gaze on that unconquerable distinction which separates it for ever from its opponents. I say to you, and through you to your brother Radicals—“Do not abandon any part of your opinions. Do not sacrifice the most insignificant of your dogmas; all I ask you is, not to advocate

any one of them so injudiciously and inopportunistly as, without advancing yourselves on that particular point, to injure yourselves on all others. Do you differ from the Government on any question which you could carry in opposition to the Government? If you say "No," as I fear you must, let me ask, are there not many questions which you may carry in concurrence with the Government? If you say "Yes," as I believe you will, then, and I put it to you as sensible and straight-seeing persons, for there is no mystery or witchcraft in these things, is it right or politic to sacrifice those opinions you can carry by acting with the Government, for opinions which you cannot carry, were you to oppose and turn out the Government.

Some men must, in conformity with the ruling impulse of their nature, seek to lead their fellow-men; when they cannot do this by superior wisdom, they will aim at doing it (if I may use such an expression) by superior singularity; for, strange to say, let any person declare he differs from all mankind—some part of mankind will, shortly afterwards, attach them-

selves to him, however ridiculous, monstrous, or impious his notions may be. In our own time we have seen Johanna Southcote, Mr. Carlile, (now, I understand, re-baptized,) Mr. Cobbett, who, lest any persons should fancy they followed his opinions, and not himself, took occasion to vary his creed almost weekly, and is perhaps the only writer who was ever, at one time, at the head of the ultra Royalist, and at another, at the head of the ultra Radical party in his country.

There will be men then, now, as there have been men at all times, not merely from low, and what we are accustomed to call interested, motives, but from the mere love of being "cheered" and "pointed at," who will reject what they call "*all compromise*," who will say that the very extremest opinions on all subjects, held by a small minority in the state, ought to be at once adopted by every body else.

They have no respect for the will and wisdom of others—none at all—but they pay it off by a very full measure of confidence in their own will and wisdom. They are quite as tyrannical, though they do not perceive it, as the greatest Tories;

because, though they say, "the good of the greatest number is to be consulted," they determine upon the good of the greatest number arbitrarily and despotically, according to the views of the very smallest.

There was an instance of this in Newcastle, lately; there was an instance in Halifax last election. There are, in that borough, I understand, about four hundred Reformers, and forty very extreme Reformers. The four hundred Reformers shew every disposition to meet and compromise matters with the forty extreme Reformers; but no; these are positive. The four hundred Reformers must be ruled by them, or they will hear of nothing; and these forty extreme Reformers turned the election against reform. Why this is as exclusive as the policy of the Peers. They pretend to little more than that forty (which may be about their proportion in the country) should dictate to four hundred. Now, is it not at once a more politic and a more liberal course to say, "We will endeavour to carry out our sentiments as far as we can, by uniting with a majority of those who think in some degree like us; and we will

also, and at the same time, take advantage of that ease and freedom of discussion which pervades our whole social system, so as to make that majority, in the end, adopt and act entirely upon our principles?"

There is no sacrifice, and some sense here. But I do not quarrel with the fact, that there are persons such as I have described; there will be — there must be. They may not wish to go further than other people, but they will put on the appearance of it. They do not walk faster in reality than their neighbours; rather the contrary perhaps; but they swagger more. Let this be! — but do not let us imagine when these gentlemen put on the buskin, and thereby appear a little higher than other folk, that they are really so. Look at them impartially and soberly, and you will find them constantly vain, sometimes ignorant, but rarely ill-intentioned. Indeed, I know not one amongst them all who cares much about being really a hero — providing he is allowed to appear before the pit in the dress of one.

I must now, however, say, that in these remarks, I have addressed myself only to a small

portion of the electors, and not to any of the elected. It would be impossible to find, at least I know of no page in history where to find, any great body of influential men who ever conducted themselves more prudently, more patriotically, more, in every sense of the word, *nobly*, than the corps of the Radical party conducted themselves last session in Parliament.

Mr. Grote, Mr. Warburton—than whom no men can be more firm in their opinions; or more qualified, from their extensive and well-digested knowledge, to be so,—Mr. Hume, to whose practical sense, excellent intentions, indefatigable exertions, I am, and for some time have been, an admiring witness; Mr. O'Connell, entitled, from all his antecedents, his eloquence, (of that sturdy kind,—which considers words not as an end, but as a means,) his general ability, his *success*, to be the prophet and leader of his land;—all these gentlemen, and others of weight, character, and ability, whose names may be seen in the lists of our divisions, have exhibited almost unexampled instances, not merely of the absence of vanity and self-interest, but (what is more unusual) of the

absence of that restless desire to be doing which frequently prevents things being opportunely, and therefore well done.

Their support has been given to the Government frankly, heartily, without which it could not have stood, as the Tories prophesied and flattered themselves it would not and could not stand.

And have not the Government, upon the whole, deserved this?

I take their leaders.*

Has there not been in Lord Melbourne's bearing a manly energy and an earnest boldness that have won upon the nation's heart? And, at the same time, have we not seen, in his free and unpremeditated eloquence, all those evidences of a high and thoughtful mind that have satisfied the nation's understanding?

Placed in the most difficult of all positions,—a minister of the crown backed by a minority, a peer contending against the great bulk of his order, an aristocrat by birth the champion of

* And yet it would be ungrateful to pass by, without note, the ready and powerful eloquence of Lord Lansdowne, or the talented and high-spirited effusions of Lord Holland.

popular rights on principle,—can the Sovereign say that his dignity has been lowered? Is there a liberal peer who feels that his rank has been insulted? Is there a man amongst the great mass of our fellow-citizens who deems that his cause has been timidly defended?

What is Lord Melbourne's policy towards Ireland?

"He had said that he would not utter anything calculated to excite the minds of the Irish people; but he must also beg most distinctly to say, that the feelings of the people of Ireland were not to be put out of the question. Those feelings ought, on the contrary, to be most seriously and respectfully considered; it was the duty of that House not to shock and wound them, but to do everything in its power to soothe and conciliate."—*Lord Melbourne, on moving the second reading of the Irish Municipal Corporation Bill, April 18, 1836.*

What his feelings in respect to improperly exercised influence?

"In every form of government there were evils; in some greater than in others, of course; but one of the greatest which prevailed in this country was that which induced every individual having power or influence over others to urge them to vote according to his view, without reference to their own will, their own feelings, or their own consciences."—*(Lord Melbourne, on going into committee on the Irish Municipal Corporation Bill, April 26, 1836.)*

What his sentiments in respect to the power of the Commons?

"His Majesty's ministers did not depend for support upon any one individual, but they depended on what all governments necessarily must depend on—the majority of the House of Commons."—(*Lord Melbourne, on the Irish Constabulary Force Bill, April 12, 1836.*)

What his sentiments in respect to the position of the Lords?

"I have already stated that your dignity, your weight, your influence, your authority in this country, are sufficiently fixed and founded upon all the advantages which result from your character. Nobody can injure it, my Lords, but yourselves. The possession of present power, and the right of individual property, are apt to mislead all men. My Lords, I implore you not to be led away, by the undisputed sway you possess in this house, to mistake your station with respect to the other house of parliament. Now I ask your Lordships to consider what has been the cause of the progression of public opinion against you, manifested in the increasing majorities which have been against you in that house? I ask you to consider whether it is not owing to your own imprudence,—whether it is not owing to your own misconduct,—whether it is not owing to your own blindness,—whether it is not owing to the manner in which you seek to separate yourselves from the whole body of the people,—from the manner in which you have tried to do everything that is unpopular, and abstained from doing anything that has in it the elements of generosity and popularity?"—(*Lord Melbourne, on the Commons' amendments*

to the Lords' amendments to the Irish Corporation Bill, June 27, 1836.)

What his opinion as to the power which resides in the great body of the people ?

“ There is another point, my Lords, to which I wish to refer. We are often told, and we have been frequently informed in the course of the present session, that you have with you, and we have against us, the majority of the intelligence, the power, the weight, and the importance of the country ; that you have with you the majority of the gentry ; that you have with you the majority of the clergy ; that you have with you, distinctly, the voice of the two universities. My Lords, I will not deny that this may be the truth, nor will I stop to inquire what really is the truth of the matter ; but, if you have this support, I implore your Lordships not to be too confident, and not to rely upon it too far. I have the greatest respect for the gentry of this country ; I have the greatest respect for the clergy ; I have no disrespect for, nor do I feel anything of ill-will towards, the universities ; but depend upon it, my Lords, these interests are not omnipotent in this country ; nor were they omnipotent when other interests, such as those of towns and cities, the interests of commerce and manufactures, the interests of the dissenters, and the general opinion of the people, were all as nothing compared with what they are now. My Lords, great measures have been carried in opposition to these interests ; whole dynasties have been changed, and families have been placed, aye, and maintained, upon the throne, in opposition to the majority of the gentry, and certainly in opposition to the great majority of the clergy, and in opposition to the decided opinion of the two universities.”—(*Lord Melbourne, on the Commons' amendments to the Lords' amendments to the Irish Corporation Bill, June 27, 1836.*)

I now turn to our own House.

On Lord John Russell (though assisted on some occasions, very ably, by Lord Howick and Mr. S. Rice) has fallen almost the whole brunt of the battle. With no very large majority, in a popular and turbulent assembly, which is almost as bad as a minority in a more cool and orderly one; confronted by men of very high ability—Sir Robert Peel, than whom no parliamentary leader was ever more skilful or accomplished, at the head of that large and powerful band which he has accustomed, not to conquer certainly, but to bear defeat without defection; the vigorous Lord Stanley; the pedantic and prepared, but by no means impotent, Sir James Graham—

“How changed!

And yet so perfect in their misery;

As not to see their foul disfigurement!”

Against all these, forming, upon the whole, as powerful a party, except during the late ministry, as were ever out of power,—a party, moreover, pursuing no longer the bashful and resigned policy of former times, but bold, contentious,—the head of the House of Commons has had to

struggle; and yet, on what occasion has his ready reply to the noble Lord, the member for North Lancashire, been ineffective? or his more laboured oration, anticipative of the right hon. member for Tamworth, disappointed?

I quote a speech (it is a most eloquent one) on a question which the Government should make *their question*; I quote it as a happy instance of good principles, great views, and high and noble language, such as a minister of England, and a leader of the popular party in England, a statesman, a scholar, a representative of the people, ought to use:—

“I therefore, Sir, differ entirely from the assertion, if it be intended to be made again, that there is any small difference, or any difference which ought not to be felt and insisted on, between the construction and reformation which we propose, and the entire destruction of these corporations advocated by the Lords. In the one, I see a wide plan, similar to that which Parliament has already adopted in the other parts of the empire, suited to the enlightened principles of the age, fitted to lead to harmony, fitted to produce good local government in Ireland, and to awaken feelings of concord and harmony between that and other parts of the empire. I see in the other, a mark of degradation,—a wish to create an invidious and cruel distinction,—a determination that the more you seem to place all the King’s subjects on an equality in future, the more Ireland shall be viewed

with a sort of suspicion, and placed beyond the pale of remedy or redress. I ask you to adopt a more generous, a more conciliatory—to adopt what I think the wiser of these two alternatives. Depend upon it, that your decision will spread wide abroad, and have a great and lasting effect. If you mean fairly, really, and justly to consider the people of the united kingdom as one people, as one people will they stand against their enemies.

————— ‘*Sic fortis Etruria crevit,
Sollicit et rerum, facta est pulcherrima Roma.*’

If you adopt the other course, you embark upon one fraught with difficulty and danger. Look around you upon the state of the world, and see how firmly the British empire and the British constitution stand. Foreign powers in relations of amity, and no fear of the interruption of the general peace, tranquillity established in England and Scotland, —devoid of the least alarm; destitute of the slightest apprehension; manufactures flourishing; agriculture, I hope, recovering from its late depression; an empire strong in arms, strong in wealth, strong in character, strong, above all, in the reputation of being a free country. To an empire thus blessed and thus favoured, there remains but one point from which danger may arise. Truly was it said, as I see it, reported to have been, by an honourable friend of mine, who for fifty years has sat in this house, and who never acted contrary to his professions, or swerved from his avowed principles,—truly was it said by him, that you make Ireland your weakness or your strength; if you choose to make her your strength, the whole of the affairs of this mighty empire will stand indissoluble and compact; if you choose to make her your weakness, you will have to carry on a struggle in which you can never finally succeed, and to bear the consequences.”—(*Lord John Russell, on the Lords' amendments to the Irish Corporation Bill, June 9, 1836.*)

If Ireland is, for the time, to be the main feature of our policy, surely there can be no juster view taken of its position,—no more noble conduct held up for our adoption!

Looking, then, I say, at all circumstances,—at the various essential subjects on which all reformers agree with the present Cabinet, and may carry through the instrumentality of that Cabinet,—considering that those subjects on which they feel differently from the Ministry would not be advanced by any rupture with it,—referring to the sentiments which the leaders in the administration have themselves expressed in either House of Parliament, and at the ability also which they have there displayed,—considering the support which they have up to this time received,—I do think that they may be considered to have as yet held and merited the confidence of the liberal part of the country.

HERE I CLOSE WITH THE PAST—WE ARRIVE AT
THE FUTURE.

What is to be done? We know the party we have to vanquish; we have reason, upon the

whole, to be satisfied with the chiefs under whom we have fought. Still, *what is to be done?* Everybody is asking the same question; no one even pretends to give an answer. You wish me to attempt one. It very often happens, that the best and indeed the only way of discovering what we are to do is, by considering well, and keeping constantly before us, what we wish to avoid.

Would you have the Tories back once more into power? Remember, if they do come back, in 1836, it will not be as in 1834. They will come back, not when a liberal ministry is untried, but after a liberal ministry has been tried, and been driven from the field. They will come back, not under every circumstance calculated to make them what they were—feeble and certain of defeat—but under every circumstance likely to confer force, and to promise victory. They will come back, moreover, not under the colours, however false, of Reformers, but openly flaunting as their ensign, “hostility to all Reform.” If thus they re-enter Downing-street, there is no

hope of conciliating the people of Ireland, no hope of reforming the institutions of England.*

Besides, you are generous enough to take some interest in the rest of the world, and you would hardly like to hear that Don Carlos was on the throne of Spain, or that Don Miguel was governing Portugal once more. If the Tories come back with a majority in the Commons' House of Parliament, that parliament will last five years? Think of the Tories in power for five years! *Would you have the Tories back?* No; I think you would not.

What will bring them back? Division or apathy amongst yourselves.

Thus you have to keep the Tories out, by avoiding the apathy or disunion that would bring them in.

If I cannot tell you, therefore, what you have

* As I write these lines I receive a letter from one of the most distinguished persons in Ireland, in which is the following passage:—"The great difficulty seems to be to keep the English Radicals from a rupture with the ministers. If the latter are ousted, two months of Tory misrule would throw Ireland back half-a-century."

to do, I can tell you what you have to beware of doing. I can give you a test by which all your plans may be tried. I may not be able to direct you right, but I can give you a mode of always discovering when you are wrong:—

If any one advise passiveness—ask yourself,
 “Will not passiveness produce apathy?”

If any one advise violence—ask yourself,
 “Will not violence produce dissension?”

When I speak of “dissension,” I sound no vain alarm! Our camp, no one denies it, contains men who have not always fought under the same banner, and amongst whom may even now be discerned the badges of different parties and opinions. Let these old distinctions produce new collisions; let dissension once more arise amongst us from the pride of this sect, or the principles of that, and the liberal majority on which we found all our prospects sinks into two jealous minorities—the Whig minority, and the Radical minority.

“Divide and rule” is so stale a policy that it displays no extraordinary ingenuity on the part

of our opponents to have adopted it. It is natural for persons in their unhappy and excited situation now to taunt the Whigs with being governed by the Radicals — now to tell the Radicals they sacrifice their opinions to the Whigs. To-day Mr. O'Connell is pointed out as the creature of Lord Melbourne. To-morrow, Lord Melbourne will be shewn as a tool in the hands of Mr. O'Connell. I say, this system of attack is quite natural in our enemies, and ought to produce no effect upon us. Still, we are often the dupes of artifices, which we at first sight discovered; and though we see our adversary's game, cannot, either through want of temper or skill, prevent his winning it. Some men are too haughty to bear even the reproach of being governed; others too impatient and too imperious to submit even to salutary restraint. Believe me, then, when you ask "*what is to be done?*" — believe me that *nothing can be done* — unless Whigs and Radicals alike see the imperative necessity of being united, and the perfect possibility of being so; — unless each under-

stands the position and feelings, and makes allowance for the feelings and position of the other.

Let us look at both!

The Whigs of the liberal party are, for the most part, the landed gentry, or those belonging in some way to the higher aristocracy of the land.

The Radicals are generally representatives of manufacturing and mercantile interests, very commonly merchants or manufacturers themselves, and apt, at all events, to take their ideas almost exclusively from the urban population they represent.

These two bodies imagine they have different interests, do mix with persons of different classes and pursuits, and may be said, in most cases, to stand related to two different sections of society. Yet, is it an evil on that account, that they should be blended together? Ought the towns, or ought the country wholly to govern a nation partly agricultural and aristocratic—partly commercial and democratic like ours? The very mixture in our body makes its excellence; assuring the

country that our policy will be no exclusive system, favourable to particular classes, or particular interests, but a broad and general system, comprehending all classes and all interests—a system such as by a great and national party ought in this great nation to be pursued.

If we are united, then, on a principle of public advantage, let us, in Heaven's name, do justice to the different views and influences that are found amongst us !

Nothing is more natural than that the country gentleman, surrounded by neighbouring squires—contemplating the calm disposition of our yeomanry in general, and the peculiarly placid aspect of our 50% voters in particular—living amidst men of opinions rarely violent, and of temperaments not prone to excitement, — nothing is more natural than that he should imagine that the real tone of the country is that which he observes, and that more extreme doctrines and ardent desires are only temporary effervescences, produced by some chance occurrence, or for some transitory purpose, in the manufacturing district of his vicinity.

On the other hand, they who preside over the immense meetings held in the metropolis, or in any of the mighty towns and cities with which this empire is overspread—who gaze on the sharp and eager countenances to which constant intercourse and contention with their fellow-men have given so energetic and passionate an expression—who hear the rapturous cheers which attend every appeal to freedom, every denunciation of abuse—who know the democratic sentiments which much thought, some little reading, and constant discussion will, not unnaturally, produce amongst large masses of men, intelligent, poor, and—powerful, as well by their number as by the union inspired by common interests and pursuits—they who preside over such meetings will, I say, on the other hand, believe that the voice of the nation is the voice resounding in *their* ears, and that the men who speak in a less vehement accent, or who entertain less extreme opinions, are few in number, deficient in principle, dishonest and uninfluential, in the same proportion that they appear moderate and cold.

Nor is this all. The squires, the gentry, the yeomen, and farmers, who do not mix with the city multitude, and who therefore have no adequate idea of the difference between the poor man separately and the multitude of poor men living, fraternizing, and working together—the squires, the yeoman, the farmers, mingling with persons accustomed only to look up to great wealth and large landed possessions, are apt altogether to mistake and underrate the influence of that humble and intelligent throng which they call the mob.

The working classes, again, having as little opportunity of observing the great, and still almost baronial power, of the rich noble, or country gentleman in his own domains,—of the weight which, by connexion, acquaintance, and fortune, he possesses also amongst a large and influential portion of society with which he lives—the working classes, feeling their own power and their own independence, in spite of their comparative poverty and lowly station in life, not unfrequently conceive an extravagant contempt for the influence of birth and fortune, and

imagine that everything depends upon their own feelings and fiat.

The first are altogether wrong—the second are not altogether right.

Wealth and birth are nothing in a state like ours for a party to fall back upon—which is not also supported by popularity and numbers: but great names and great properties give to numbers credit and respectability, and to popularity, solidity, and duration; nor is it without advantage—when the majority of the Commons is absurdly accused of dangerous designs against the peace and property of the empire—to be able to shew, as the leader of that majority—a man of one of the highest and most powerful families in England.

Besides, though we have not, most certainly, a majority in the House of Lords, we have a large and very powerful minority in that assembly, rallying public respect round historical titles, exercising, from their high stations and great attainments, considerable influence over their equals and associates, and affording also—nor is this, in a monarchical country, to be overlooked—a fitting and decorous link between the

sovereign, at the head of the government, and the great masses of the nation on whom it reposes.

Such a body is not to be servilely followed, but neither is it to be superciliously despised. The Radicals without the Whigs would find it difficult to effect reform, except by revolution; the Whigs without the Radicals, incapacitated, by their past conduct and professions, from efficiently or consistently opposing reform, would neither be able to moderate nor to guide it. Separate, the one party would become powerless or desperate. The other would be left powerless. United, both are at once strong and safe. "Ay, ay, union is all very well," said a radical friend of mine to me, the other day, "but this union means that the Radicals are to concede everything and the Whigs nothing."

Now, in the first place, what sensible and honest men have chiefly to consider is, not whether they yield most to others or whether others yield most to them, but whether, by the concessions they make, they are benefiting or injuring the cause they have at heart.

In the second place, what my radical friend

said to me *is not only* wrong, but; as there are certain rules in politics as in science, *must* be wrong; since, when two sets of men act together, the more vehement, the more passionate, the more extreme in their opinions, are sure (though their power may not always be apparent) to exercise, unless they commit some violent absurdity, a considerable and constant influence over the more moderate or timid with whom they are leagued. See the various changes in the liberal administrations that have taken place since the formation of the first, in 1830 ! . . . On which side have they been? Mr. Wynn, a member of the first whig ministry, was a member of the last tory one. . . . Lord Stanley, Sir James Graham, Lord Goderich, and even the more liberal Duke of Richmond, are all left behind.

There has not been a year, during which the Whigs have been in power, that the Radicals have not gained something which they could not have gained alone. This is reason enough for maintaining their present alliance.

What, indeed, says Sir William Molesworth to his supporters in Cornwall? "If the Whigs

do not act cordially with us, still," says he, "let us act cordially with the Whigs;" nor is this advice given from any personal or peculiar liking to the Whig body; it is given from policy and good sense alone; a policy and good sense which Sir William Molesworth has found it possible to combine with principle and spirit.

Still, though I think the Radicals would be acting dangerously and indiscreetly if they did ought to dissolve an union which they maintained so prudently through all the trials of last Session—still I am quite willing to accede to your observation; viz., *that it would be desirable to place the Whig-Radical union on the most solid and permanent basis possible.*

You say that there should be Whigs and Radicals supporting a reforming Government; is only a natural occurrence, and can occasion no dangerous division; but for the Government to appear wholly Whig, and a great part of its supporters to be wholly Radical, though any quarrel would be fatal to the interests of both parties, may, in the long run, occasion quarrel.

Being supported by Whigs and Radicals,

the Government (I will not deny it,) might stand more firmly, and, consequently, act more boldly, if it seemed more completely the joint representative of Radicals and Whigs.

Including, as it does include, both parties (for what are Sir J. Hobhouse, Mrs. Poulton Thomson, Sir H. Parnell?) it might find it advantageous to admit within its bosom, neither party making a sacrifice, the principles of both parties.

I have said, in another part of this letter, that the very nature of reform is to beget divisions; it might be well, therefore, for a reforming government to have a basis congenial with its nature, and calculated to be as little shaken as possible by those circumstances which are inherent in it. When the Tories first set up for reformers they found the necessity of this; for their long administration could not have lasted a day, but for the Catholic question being considered an "open question." This being the fundamental question of reform on which they differed amongst themselves, they declared that their opinions on this question should not be considered "differ-

ences." The great question of reform on which they were at variance, was left open by the Tories—in like manner, the great questions of reform on which we vary might be left open amongst the liberals. What "Catholic Emancipation" was to them,—“an open question,” —“Ballot,” and “Triennial Parliaments,” for instance, might be to us—open questions. *There would then be no longer a party in a party.* One gentleman would not be called the leader of the Radicals, nor another, of the Whigs. Lord Melbourne, equally liked by both, would be the leader of Radicals and Whigs.

But it is not only on specific principles that disagreement may occur; it may also arise from differences as to the extent to which principles should be carried out; and, as in the former case you wish the ministry to enter into the feelings and position of the Radicals, so here, I think, the Radicals should enter into the feelings and position of the Ministry. No Government can act up to the opinions which even the members who form it may entertain as individuals: a heavy responsibility weighs

upon them. It is impossible to retreat if they advance too far ; it is in most cases easy to advance further if they ought or must.

Nor are we to forget this :—a set of men, like a Cabinet, meeting and consulting together, never move, and never can move, except on very rare occasions, with the vigour of one man, under the influence of his own nature and his own inspirations.

Compliances are to be made—scruples to be weighed and considered—agreement to be sought. Hence necessarily the appearance of weakness—~~an appearance~~ not incidental to one administration, but to all administrations, if you watch their career for any length of time, that have ever existed in this country. This is a disadvantage no doubt attendant upon our Constitution, but that constitution has also counterbalancing advantages. It is childish, then, to quarrel with an evil which is not an accident but a necessity—a necessity to which we must at all times submit, except when one man of a peculiar character or career alters the general tendency of things by his own peculiar genius or position;

and introduces a momentary despotism, paramount over our constitutional combinations.

Then, indeed, we may have a sort of "mayor of the palace"—a kind of official tyrant—with all the good and evil, the vigour and the wrong which attends on arbitrary power. But here is a state of things neither natural to our manners nor our government; in fact, a temporary overthrow of both.

Well, then, we ought neither to expect the Government to bring forward every question we desire, nor yet to go as far as we might wish in those questions which are brought forward. Our satisfaction should be obtained, if a certain number of good and requisite measures are introduced each session in the direction of our views, and carrying out those views to *what liberal men in general, and not ourselves in particular*, shall consider a reasonable and fair extent.

So much in respect to the union we should promote; now to the apathy we would avoid!

Indeed, union is difficult to maintain, in what may be called a quiescent state; there must be

some energy, some living principle, as it were, infused into a body, the different parts of which are, for any length of time, to act and move together.

Already a few gentlemen have begun to say, "We cannot go on so"—"We cannot come up to Parliament to carry measures, by our diligent support, which are afterwards to be carelessly and contemptuously rejected."

Now it is quite clear that if these gentlemen do not come up and carry *their* measures, that the Lords will, even in the Commons, carry *theirs*. Therefore this is saying little more than that "We have engaged in a difficult contest, and have not the heart or the time to fight it properly out." This would be a grave error; but I admit with you, that human nature is human nature, and will commit errors. Men may grow disheartened, and, if they do, they will act contrary to their interest, like disheartened men.

This is why I said we have got to guard against apathy as well as against disunion;—this is why:—when you ask me what is to

be done, I look out for popular acts that will establish union and prevent apathy.

Not that I agree with Mr. O'Connell, that the Ministry want popularizing; on the contrary, they are, in my opinion, popularized, as they ought to be popularized, by their conduct of last session.

The Ministry do not want popularizing, but the party may want *rallying*.

Well, then, suppose that "Ballot and Triennial Parliaments" were open questions, *could anything else be done for rallying the party?*

How does a wise general usually combine and cheer the forces he commands? This was Cæsar's great art, and also Napoleon Bonaparte's; and their science consisted in a very simple rule, uniformly practised—that of favouring and promoting those who served under them: but these are heathen or military examples. Shall we turn to the church? How was protestantism founded?—how maintained? How did Christianity grow up under Constantine? How were our churches spread over the

Eastern Empire?" Not that I am one of those who see no talent and no merit out of my own political circle. There is no man who feels a sincerer respect for Sir Robert Peel than I do; I do justice to his talents, his eloquence, his indefatigable industry; but still, though no person admires him more sincerely, no person has opposed him more steadily—why?—*because I differ from his opinions.*" I carry out this rule, then, to men whose abilities are less, but whose sentiments are the same, and, keeping Sir R. Peel from office, I would not advance his adherents to place. It is not that I like exaggerated sectarian and party zeal. In ordinary times, indeed, I might, in favour of a particular class of eminent persons, whose reflections give them naturally some political bias, but whose nature and whose lives distract them from it,—in favour of such men I might, in ordinary times, be loth to enforce that general rule of official exclusion which I think should prevail against political opponents. But in times like the present, when two parties, professing two perfectly distinct creeds, are struggling for power, there never

has been, and perhaps there cannot well be, any other policy, in order to maintain our own credit, and weight, and respectability with the public, than to favour our own friends alone. For many years persons professing liberal ideas were marked men ? I remember seeing a letter from Lord Castlereagh, in which he says—all persons even filling the subordinate and professional office of consul should be “*well known for their opinions.*” Well, Lord Castlereagh and his opinions are gone by ; liberal ideas and the persons representing liberal opinions have now their turn. Not to employ men who coincide with those opinions, and who have been excluded for them, is to betray a want of confidence in the ability of our adherents, or a want of courage in braving our opponents. Either case is a manifestation of weakness. I adopt them without meaning any disrespect to Tory talents, or respectability, in the doctrines pretty generally advocated, in respect to official patronage and employments.

But has the Government not acted upon these doctrines ?

Among the late appointments I find—

Mr. Romilly, (son of Sir S. Romilly, and always voting with the Radical members when in the House of Commons,) Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

Mr. Arthur Buller, (brother of Mr. Charles Buller, one of the most decided Radicals in the House of Commons,) made a Charity Commissioner.

Mr. Shiel, (brother of the member for Tipperary,) Secretary of Legation to our Embassy in Persia.

Mr. Stuart, (an old, well-known, and able reforming writer,) a Factory Commissioner.

Dr. Bowring, (though a Radical, and usually voting against the Government in the House of Commons,) employed (and very usefully) in advancing our Foreign Commercial Relations.

Mr. Blamire, (one of the most liberal county members,) placed at the head of the Tithe Commission.

Mr. Hovenden, (known for his legal works, and enlightened principles,) Secretary to the same.

Mr. Lister, (distinguished as a liberal writer,) placed at the head of the Registration Commission.

Mr. Austin, (not better known for his very great abilities than for his very liberal opinions)—appointed Commissioner to Malta.

Here, you see, is a pretty fair list, sufficiently composed of Whigs and Radicals intermingled, to be called a Whig-Radical list. There are a few instances, no doubt, that may be quoted of a contrary nature, but some allowance may justly be claimed in favour of administrative talent, and a sort of high-minded scruple as to employing mere political adherents.

Still, denied, as the Government have been, the power of carrying out their principles, they may be obliged, more rigorously and exclusively, to exercise the power, which they cannot be denied, of appointing persons of their own party.

It may become requisite for the ministry to exercise their executive rights with a vigour proportionate to that with which the Lords exercise their Legislative rights.* Since a party policy, and a decided party policy, is pursued

* The Commons have placed the Government in power, and are at war with the Lords. The Government may say, "We cannot force the Lords to pass your laws;" but then the Commons may reply, "You can prevent the partizans of the Lords from having any of your patronage."

against them—a party policy, and a decided party policy may be called for from them :—as no compromise is expected from the Lords→the just retaliation is, taking all place and power from the Tories.

Having stated, then, that I consider our main and immediate objects to be—the prevention of apathy—the prevention of disunion—I am disposed to consider — “ the making open those leading questions on which Reformers differ”— “ the confining all favour and patronage to Reformers alone,” if not as two “ things that are to be done”—as two things that, “ if done,” would render our party more united and more spirited. Still do not let us forget *these are but means, to which the end they propose is not to be sacrificed*. We must not go to loggerheads to-day; if we cannot, by any misfortune, agree as to swearing an *eternal* friendship; and it will be but a poor policy if, in any quarrel about *keeping a few stray Tories out*, we bring the *whole batch of Tories in*. No; the Government should not be urged to take this course, as a condition of support: we do not know the difficulties that lie in

the way of this course ; and our object is to strengthen the Government. But the Government may be told, that if this course could be taken, our union would be consolidated—our apathy would be prevented ; and that there would thus be an end to all the hopes of our opponents.

A new question starts up—what is to be done with the Lords ? You ask me—“whether I am for a reform in that assembly”—what reform ? Some say, “destroy the peerage altogether,” and they make use of this argument, which certainly looks like a logical one :—“You should have the best assembly to govern the country possible. If the House of Commons be not the best, make it the best—if it be the best, in God’s name do not have a worse.” Others reply, by observing, “that this argument is not so logical as it appears—that the best assembly for one purpose may not be the best for another. The best assembly to excite, to animate, and stir up, as it were, the heart and spirit of a nation, may not be the best for steadying and regulating the action which shall thus have been inspired.”

Two assemblies may be two different things ;

you may make either of them better in their several ways, but you could not make it the "other."

I come, then, to Mr. O'Connell's plan ; shall we have a House of Lords chosen from the Lords, but by the same electors that choose the people ? Some, again, are for this—but they are told, " that if the electors of the Commons were to choose people exactly like their representatives in the Commons, they would then have but one assembly—in feeling ; with a restriction placed upon their choice in respect to ability, and thus the whole affair of a second chamber would be a useless ceremony :—while, on the other hand, if the electors of the Commons could not find among the Lords persons of similar principles to those whom they chose for the Commons, then they would naturally say that the institution did not answer its end, and ask for a new change."

Now, suppose we have an aristocratic senate chosen by a wealthier class of electors than the lower house: this encounters the following objection—viz., that if such senate, by any chance, were not much more popular than its predecessor, it would, from the very circumstance of

its being elected, and from the very weight and consciousness of power which representation gives, be far more audacious, in supporting its opinions, than that body which, in spite of any ostentatious courage it may clothe itself with, still does feel, and cannot help feeling, the weakness always attendant upon irresponsible authority.

“It behoves us, therefore,” say many, who are for popular government, “well to consider whether a large majority of the upper and wealthier classes is for us or against us, before we would give them a chamber representing, and chosen expressly to represent their opinions.”

There are two other alterations which have their partizans, being thought more desirable than the rest, because more possible.

One, without changing the formation of the House of Peers, would circumscribe the power of the Peers, and render it impossible for them to exercise their veto more than twice, when a certain majority in the Commons was against them. This would not, in fact, alter what has hitherto been the practice of our constitution, but it would make the form and the practice coincide,

and steady men's minds by assuring them as to the extent to which the Lords *can* oppose the people, which is now constitutionally undefined. Such an alteration, moreover, would prevent the possible necessity of any exercise of the extreme rights of the Commons, their only resource, when the Lords exercise their extreme rights, but which can never be put in force except with much practical inconvenience.

Another reform, or change, also, not extraordinary, since the law does now sanction it, would be the creation of a certain number of peers not hereditary, and mingled with those who are so. They might be chosen by the sovereign for their great abilities in civil affairs, in warfare, science, or literature, and thus make the peerage now what it was formerly, when chivalry and high blood alone distinguished men—the true representation of the individual superiorities of the country.

These two last changes are not very difficult nor very dangerous, but, like the rest, they are subject to controversy. For my own part, I do not think it necessary to pass any opinion upon such schemes, however favourable I may be to any of them—unless they are—and therefore I

ask whether they are—practical measures at this moment?

I well remember that Plutarch says, in speaking of one of the generals whose life he is relating, that he was remarkable for this—"He could always foresee the course which his enemies presumed he would take for defeating their designs—and by the exercise of this foresight, and adopting other measures than those it was supposed he would use, he never failed in succeeding." Now the conduct of the Peers has been so very singular and so very rash, to all appearance, that I cannot help thinking, even after I have allowed much for Lord Lyndhurst's natural levity and recklessness, that there must be some design in it which has not as yet been generally perceived;—I ask, therefore, what that design can be. The whole danger and only cause of perdition to the Tories and the Lords is, our majority in the Commons. It is evident, therefore, that one of the principal objects in any policy they pursue must be to convert that majority into a minority.

Let us suppose, then, Lord Lyndhurst in council, and haranguing those whose discussions he is to lead,—what might he say?—

“There seems to me, my lords, two advantages in this daring course, which I, in opposition to what has been said by my right honourable friend, (hem!) the member for Tamworth, advise and adjure your lordships to pursue. In the first place, we thereby give heart and spirit to our friends, and make them feel that we are not merely directing a skilful retreat, but boldly contending for open victory. In the next place, we are sowing dissensions, of no undangerous nature, in the camp of our atrocious enemy; for observe, my lords, if by this course we do not excite any outcry against your lordships, then evidently we triumph, and may presume that the country will shortly back our efforts. But supposing, which is far more probable, I grant you, that we do excite this outcry—what follows? Why, some of those reprobates called Radicals, who feel none of that respect and veneration which your virtues and your wisdom (bowing to ——— and ———) are so well qualified to inspire—these persons, borne away by the ardour of their ungovernable natures, will cry at once for violent measures of organic change in your lordships’ house. ‘Is this not to

be feared?' you will say, perhaps! Not at all; because, from that moment the band which now hangs over and awes us as a majority, sinks into two antagonist minorities. Thus, happily, the arguments which were used for changes in the constitution (smiling sarcastically) will be over, and the two houses agree as of old! My right honourable friend at the head of a majority in one house, and my unworthy self, your lordships, at the head of a majority in the other, conducting harmoniously the affairs of state, and enjoying those high situations which, looking at our various qualities, it would be ungrateful not to acknowledge that Providence designed for us."

Do not you think there may be something in this? No doubt the game thus played is a most dangerous one; no doubt that if we are on our guard against the errors—we will not call them errors — the differences that are anticipated amongst reformers; no doubt if we pursue a plan for carrying our reforms which keeps us together, and the Lords still pursue a plan for obstinately refusing those reforms — every day they persist in their present course is gathering up a

wrath, which, when it bursts, may be fatal to them; but if, on the other hand, our anger against the Lords—pushing some further than others—divides and separates us; then, indeed, Lord Lyndhurst may get a majority in his favour out of that very question—peerage reform—which he has excited.

Besides, though we may say “we can afford to lose seceders; let them go,” &c.,—we cannot afford to lose them. The whole strength of our argument against the lords lies in our majority—in our majority which carries measures in the Commons that are rejected by the Lords; thus the constitution cannot work—thus legislation is paralyzed—thus our constitution becomes a dead letter.

But just suppose we have not the majority, (and to produce this result it would not be necessary to lose many,) then how are we? The House of Commons no longer passes laws which the House of Lords rejects; the constitution is no longer bound, nor legislation paralyzed. The two houses do go on together; where is now your practical necessity for a change

in the peerage? May not the very question of this change, raised indiscreetly, avert and obviate its necessity?

As for what Mr. Hutt is presumed to say, but which he really, I am convinced, does not mean to say—viz. that unless the Government bring forward or support some measure of peerage reform, he should no longer vote with them,—this, indeed, were it true, would be a singular way of spitting the Lords.

A captain in our naval service, the other day, had two boys before him, on whom he was about to inflict punishment: one jumped into the sea, and was drowned; you might think the captain disturbed;—Not at all. "Give," said he, "that boy's lashes (pointing to the boy who was sinking in the waves) to this boy," pointing to the one shivering on the deck. The thing was done, and the captain congratulated himself that justice had not been disappointed. Let us not caricature the conduct of this worthy captain!

The Lords have been opposing the Government in a most atrocious manner. Wicked Lords, naughty Lords, says (or is presumed to say) Mr.

Hutt, but don't think you shall escape us ; if we cannot punish you, which we will do if we can, do not be too quick in rubbing your hands ; there stands Lord John Russell, and we will give him a capital drubbing, you may depend upon it.

Mr. Hutt is angry with the Lords for opposing the Government, and if he cannot punish the Lords he will inflict summary vengeance upon the Government. The Tories have been thwarting the measures of a Liberal Administration, and we revenge ourselves on the Lords by turning out the Liberal Administration. Just put this into common law. Jack attempts to murder John ; the law is very active, but Jack cannot be caught : never mind, says the attorney-general ; all is right ; we'll hang John, who has just escaped being murdered.

Do you think, then, I leave the Lords triumphant ? No ; they cannot be vanquished but by a majority in the Commons—united, spirited. I wish with you to increase our union and our spirit ; they cannot conquer except by our sinking into a minority, divided and apathetic. I wish with you to prevent either our division or apathy.

The wisest general is not the one who declares battle at the *first* opportunity, but he who selects the *best*. We may suffer defeat by contending indiscreetly for victory; we may obtain victory by providing discreetly against defeat:—neither are you to suppose that a policy is not an active one, because it is not a desperate one.

When Mr. Canning, unable to contend against the holy alliance in ancient Spain, said, “I will call the new world into existence to redress the balance of the old,” he made use not only of a beautiful, but of a statesman-like and politic expression.

We may adopt it. The new world came into existence with the reform bill, but we can give it greater weight in the scale. If the Government were able to say, “we will redress the aristocratic tendency of the Lords; by no longer discountenancing a mode thought more popular for electing the Commons;”—if the Government were able to say, “We will redress the aristocratic temper which refuses all popular measures, by employing, through the whole range of our authority, only popular men;”—they would be adopting a policy like that of Mr. Canning.

You may think this course but a moderate one. So it is; but it seems the most practicable one, and it would have a powerful effect. You may urge stronger measures; they cannot be adopted: you may urge these; you might possibly succeed. Remember the fable:—Robin Hood's archers shot the worst, but they hit the mark; Queen Eleanor's shot the best, but they missed the moon.

What, then, you may say, will you leave the House of Lords as it is?

You cannot alter the House of Lords, and it is not wise or safe that you should, however you may think ill of it; unless there be a great majority in the country and the Commons who are in favour of your doing so. All that I look to, then, is, retaining the majority you have got, and waiting under the influence of those circumstances which, if you will but allow the time, must powerfully increase it.

As to peerage reform itself, there may be wisdom in many of the theories respecting "The Peerage" now put forth. But the English never busied themselves much about governmental

theories ; what they have always looked to is, governmental effects.

Their quarrel with the House of Lords is not because that house is an hereditary body, but because it is a body that seems determinedly opposed to all popular government. If you wish for a reform in the Lords, you have only one way to effect it,—the way they themselves are taking. But a good pilot waits till the tide is high, before he attempts the harbour.

You must wait.—Every fresh measure rejected is a new wave for your vessel. Three years ago, the man who spoke of peerage reform as likely to be carried in our time, would have been thought a madman: three years hence, if the Lords pursue their present course, the man who contends against it will be deemed out of his senses. But this is not the case yet. The people of our country are not impetuous ; they do not learn, like the French, a theory one day, and call for it to be put into practice the next. They adopt changes slowly, not from the love of change, but from the thorough conviction of their necessity. If the Lords create a general idea as to the necessity of

a change—you know whether they are doing it or not—depend upon it that change will come.

You cannot have a stronger engine at work for the alteration of the peerage (you see what it has already done) than the unchecked exercise of the will of the peers.

Yes, you may say ; but in the meantime, three or four years are passed, and nothing done. Not so ; according to your wishes and views, a great deal is being done :—for you are effecting that very reform, by the most effectual means, that you are contending for. You are forcing, day by day and hour by hour, the sense of its necessity on the public mind. What great measure was ever carried by less sacrifice ?

The House of Lords has stood, unchanged, many centuries. Cannot you devote to its alteration a few years ?

In the meantime, it is not improbable, if we were to make a stand, that that stand would, in all policy, be made on no new question, attacking the presumed rights of another branch of the legislature. But, on the old questions, which we

have already carried, and which we may support by the exercise of rights vested, anciently and constitutionally in us.

On peerage reform, if we brought it forward to-morrow, we should be in a minority; but if we were in a majority, we should be little advanced. Would the Lords, who are refusing every other measure, consent to that?

But we have powers, if we mean to engage with the Lords, which are as completely in the hands of the Commons as the measures we have before spoken of may be considered in the hands of the Government. We have powers which a majority of *one* will enable us effectually to use.

The Lords, to avert the exercise of such extreme powers, have rarely used their own powers in any extreme way. They now choose to do so. They choose to refuse their sanction to all laws coming from the Commons, and they say they have a *right* thus to act. There is, by-the-by, a beautiful saying of Lord Bolingbroke, in respect to rights and powers, which I would wish to call to their lordships' attention.

“Even the infinite power of God Almighty,” says Lord Bolingbroke, “is limited by his infinite wisdom.”

So I say of all human power; it should be limited by its wise and discreet use, without which it has no divine sanction, and can have no long duration.

The Lords, however, choose to use their rights violently and indiscreetly—we have rights and powers, of various descriptions, which we, as disregardless of them as they are of us, may use, if we are so minded.

They may think proper to maintain a species of government in Ireland that can only be upheld by the sword. This is their right. But what is ours? Why, we, if we choose, can put the sword into the scabbard.

If they will not sanction those laws which serve to establish good government in Ireland, we may refuse that army which can alone support a government of wrong.

With the measures that are to procure permanent tranquillity, we may couple the appro-

priation of that part of our revenue which is now employed in maintaining the temporary dominion of force.

Here we infringe no rights of the constitution, no rights of the Lords. We stand upon our own rights—handed down to us by our forefathers. Nay, we use against the Barons the very weapon which they, the Barons, formerly used against the Monarch. Neither would any shock be given to credit. The only thing stopped would be the payment of a military force for maintaining bad government in Ireland. We should only in fact be reducing our Army Estimates. I do not say that this is a thing to be done without the utmost caution on the one hand, and the utmost provocation on the other. It should not in justice be attempted unless every hope of agreement with the Lords were gone; it should not, in prudence, be attempted unless a majority in this, and a greater majority in the next House of Commons were likely to be in favour of it. But here is a step which can be taken by our majority of the Commons alone,

and might consistently be taken in support of the measures which that majority have voted. Yet, let me not be misunderstood!

I merely instance, if matters came to a struggle of prerogative, one of those prerogatives which the constitution has given for such extreme cases to the national representatives—they have others also—as the history of our constitution shews, not idle nor unimportant.

These prerogatives may not—I will not say can not—be exercised by the Commons, as long as the ministers of the Commons are in office.

Things, however, will, ere long, be brought to a crisis.*

The time may come, when, if the present Administration and its present adherents remain united, that Administration may say, "If we cannot carry a measure of such simple justice as the Irish Municipal Bill, we will go out, and leave it to you to conduct affairs how you can, upon the principles of injustice." The time

* What we have to watch for is a good method—what we have to guard against is a bad method—of bringing them to this.

may come for pursuing this course—a course, however, which, from the grave consequences it might involve, should not be pursued without much and conscientious consideration ; but in order for the Government to pursue it with any chance of success, what is necessary ? what is essential ? That we should at that moment be a phalanx, firm and compact, behind the Government.

A dissolution would, then, concentrate our struggle, and bring the matter at once to issue before the country—"whether the Lords or Commons shall be predominant." Let not that question, however, even then, be brought inconsiderately before the country, in any unpopular or unpalatable shape ; nor let us, too hastily, presume to make *one cry* the test for all constituencies. As our object is, now, to maintain the majority of Reformers we have got, let our object be, then, to make the majority of Reformers we may get as great as possible.

Should that majority—elected to uphold the rights of the Commons—declare for an alteration in the reconstitution of the Lords, and the consequence of our struggle be—as perhaps it might

—peerage reform, that great change would then arrive when the question had become ripe and the necessity urgent; but, as men of action, this is not the immediate point we have to contend for; and, also, as men of moderation and judgment, it is not, if we obtain good government without it, an object essential to effect.

The great corner-stones of society and of government—no one admits this more freely than I do—are more easily removed than they are easily replaced. We readily find new ideas, but it is long before we find new customs, and without habit there is no stability.

I, then, for my part, am always quite willing to sacrifice any ideas I may entertain as to what is “the better,” when I have to disturb what is moderately good; but to *that which has been proved intolerably bad and incapable of amendment, men will not submit.* It is better, under such circumstances, to appeal at once to chance and to fortune.

I wish to do the constitution of the House of Lords every justice. I do not consider that assembly as merely a body of individuals, neither

is it so. It represents a principle which exists in our society—hereditary acquirement; it represents also a class which, like itself, is in possession of large entailed estates. Still the principle of primogeniture is not now, either in Europe or in England, that which it was when the House of Lords was constituted, nor does it repose on the same obligations. The feudal necessities for it are gone by, and it is not by irritating men's minds into investigating the question that the feudal custom which was founded on those necessities is most likely to remain. Besides, let us look over our country and see whether those interests and those classes which the Lords—according to their own view of their authority—represent, are in the same situation that they were but a short time ago; a few years since two-thirds of our population, as I have elsewhere observed, were an agricultural population mainly dependent on the great proprietors of the soil; at the time at which I am speaking, two-thirds of our population are a manufacturing and urban population, dependent chiefly, not upon the upper, but on what we call the middling classes,

for support. In the meantime, great cities, which we may almost call empires, have been rising into existence, while knowledge has been widely and rapidly diffusing itself; and, with knowledge, that desire for action, and that passion for power, which are its natural and necessary concomitants.

It is impossible for these causes not to produce effects; it is impossible for these things to have been taking place in our society without their influence being felt upon our Government. The Lords fill no longer the same space in the community which they did formerly; they can no longer exercise the same power.

They may yet moderate and temper public opinion; but they cannot guide, nor can they check it. *If they wish to maintain the form of the old constitution, they must be sensible to the spirit of the new people.* Their power they may still hold hereditarily from times past; but then their policy must be conformable to the feelings of the times they live in.

You may tell me they do not know this, and point to some of the ridiculous rant that is now

being vented by a few of their most violent supporters.

Remember the story of the philosopher and the swine in the storm. "Those pigs," said the wise man, "fear nothing." But the more sagacious of the crew must be sensible of their danger. Or do they flatter themselves with impunity, because, amidst the raging of the ocean, they cannot discern the precise wave which will sweep over them?

It is not, indeed, a single act or a single event which determines those great changes in government of which these persons would be the victims. Ancient institutions must be seriously abused and decayed, and the prospect of the future black as the experience of the past, before their destruction is accomplished. But, when things are in this lamentable condition, the nature of the disease is to indicate the remedy to those qualified to administer it. "*Times, and occasions, and provocations,*" says Mr. Burke, "*will teach their own lessons.*" The wise will determine from the gravity of the case, the irritable from sensibility to oppression; the high

minded from disdain and indignation at abused power in unworthy hands; the brave and bold from the love of honourable danger in a glorious cause; at all events, whatever the persons engaged, the motives impelling them, the means they employ, whenever the wrong is crying the redress is found.

Let us not, then, be so impatient as to what may happen in the end, as prudent and politic in what we do at the moment. One day telleth of another, and one day certifieth of another; it is—by paying attention to each step, that we arrive, over a precipitous and dangerous road, most swiftly and most safely at the close of our journey.

Thus, when you are considering, "what is to be done?" overlook not, I implore you, that point to which at the commencement of this part of my letter I was anxious to call your attention—viz., what is *not* to be done. Be not, I entreat you, more eager to give battle than provident in seeking after victory. Do not bring forward the question of Peerage Reform in any way that can benefit the cause of the Peers. In

your ardour against the Tories, do not bring them in;—in your affection towards the policy of the government—a policy you yourselves suggested—do not turn them out. In your prudence, do not slumber; in your zeal, do not divide; in your pressure from without, urge not the ministers to do that which you know they cannot do, but that which you think they can; not that which would dismiss them from their post, but that which would confirm them in it. Endeavour in your sphere so to act as to urge the Whigs to shew that their views are really popular—the Radicals, that their objects are really practicable.

Let the Government abide during the recess, and come forward at the meeting of parliament under these auspices. Let them come forward—as I have no doubt they will—uniting all reformers round their standard, by a vigorous and comprehensive policy for the obtainment of practical objects. Let every reformer dismiss from his mind, as objects of immediate struggle, those objects which are now impracticable.

The first act of the session should be one

of ample justice to the claims of the dissenters. Not only are these independent and high-spirited men the great and permanent force in this country, always ready to maintain the fight of civil and religious liberty; their claims are also some of the oldest and best established links which have hitherto held all reformers together.

To desert the dissenters now, would be to desert our best friends, at the time we are most threatened by our worst enemies; to break our oldest bonds of union when we are most in the necessity of forming new ones. I never did, entertain any apprehension of this calamity.

* The observation so much insisted upon of Lord John Russell, appears to me to have been very strangely misconceived.

A minister, asked, when he had little reason to expect such a question, whether the course of the Government on a future and very important measure, would be satisfactory to a particular individual, could hardly give at once—without even consulting his colleagues—a very satisfactory answer.

But whatever might be the value of words spoken thus unpremeditatedly, that value disappears altogether if opposed to the premeditated and well-considered statement that followed; a statement which Lord John Russell must have made on the part of the Government in general, which he had then had an opportunity of consulting.

Let the next step be a generally good and useful measure, not likely, by some favourable chance, to be opposed, such as a Poor Law for Ireland, a measure that, happen what may, would prevent the year from being wholly profitless, and keep legislation and improvement moving, even through the stagnant pool it is so difficult to pass; a measure which, though not "a party measure," would add weight and strength to the party that brought it forward, as well from the benefit it would produce as from the ability it would evince.

We then come to our old measures, from which it may perhaps be politic to select one whereon to make a trial of the dispositions of the country. What the event of that trial may be, what the result of the many and mighty influences then brought into conflict, I will not anticipate; but this, as our guide, through all difficulties, let us remember:—

We are not to be apathetic—we are not to be disunited. We are to seek all compromises with differing friends. We are to shew no tenderness to implacable opponents:—in short—*we are to*
GIVE NO CHANCE TO THE TORIES.

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